

# NEW YORK Saturday Evening Journal

## A HOME WEEKLY

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No. 414

### HOME.

BY EDEN E. REXFORD.

Without, the night is chill and cold;  
Within the fire is bright,  
And shelt'ring in home's happy fold  
We dread no storm to-night.

We see the white snow falling fast,  
We hear the wild winds shriek,  
But listening to the mournful blast,  
A smile is on each cheek.

But, ah, this dreary winter night,  
How many wanderers roam,  
Who shiver at the wind's delight  
And know no place for home.

God pity all the homeless ones,  
Wherever they may roam,  
And grant them, all their wanderings done,  
A place in God's dear home.

## Happy Jack and Pard;

OR,

The White Chief of the Sioux.

A ROMANCE OF SPORTS AND PERILS OF POST AND PLAIN.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

### CHAPTER I.

A FRONTIER FESSEYAL.

"MAKES a feller 'most sorry for the old Injun fashion, eh, pard? I can't say as I ever hankered after the 'wimmen critters—they're most gen'ally bad medicine, an' they ain't many lodges big enough to hold them an' luck, too, to my notion; but when I first lay eyes on her, I had to fight mighty hard inside myself to keep from snatchin' her up an' makin' a tail-ender race fer it—I did so!"

"There's another man who thinks much the same, or his eyes speak false," quietly remarked the young man addressed, with a slight nod toward the small, flag-draped platform or pavilion. "He must be a new-comer, for I never saw him before."

"They ain't many men as care to see him twice. Take a good squar' look an' see what you kin make out from his face." The speakers—who are destined to figure prominently in this chronicle—were standing a little apart from the main gathering, and both were men who would attract attention in any crowd, though strong contrasts in nearly every respect.

The first speaker was scarcely of medium height; his limbs were small, but admirably rounded, and though at first glance he seemed almost effeminate, his strength, activity and wonderful skill in almost every species of athletics had long since passed into a proverb. His features were clear-cut and regular, and would have been fairly handsome only for the high cheekbones. His face was smooth and beardless, though the hair of his head was unusually heavy, falling in straight black masses below his shoulders. His eyes, though rather small, were wonderfully bright and keen, and few men could meet them fairly without an uncomfortable feeling of being read through and through.

His garments were almost severely plain, of Indian-tanned buckskin, and minus all the fringes and beadings most men of his class are so fond of. Even his weapons were unadorned. Yet one object about him shone and sparkled in the sunlight: a beautifully-embroidered and ornamented pouch hung upon his breast—a "medicine-sack."

Such was William—or "BILL COMSTOCK," the scout and guide. His career, though briefer, was no less famous than that of Wild Bill or Buffalo Bill, and to this day many a rough voice grows soft, many a hard eye dims, as the memory of the true-hearted scout is recalled to the mind. True as steel to a friend—bitter as death to an enemy, he died in harness, nobly performing his duty; and now lies in a nameless grave. Peace to his ashes!

His companion—known far and wide as "Happy Jack"—was of a different type. He was a sturdy, full-chested, with a round, compact waist, swelling hips and long limbs; a model of manly strength and symmetry. His complexion was fair, his features almost classically regular, his eyes large and deep blue. A heavy mustache shaded his lips, while a magnificent beard hung in yellow curls to his shoulders. His dress, like that of his partner, was mainly of buckskin, and bore traces of recent hard riding and rough living.

"Unless my eyes deceive me," he said, after a steady gaze in the direction indicated by Comstock, "that man is what you rarely see—a brave tyrant. God help the man—or woman—whose only hope is in his mercy!"

"I knowed you'd see it," laughed the scout, softly. "That's Cap'n Stone, of the —. He managed to git him changed to this regiment. I don't reckon he'd 'a' lived through the next scrimmage—indeed, the boys didn't make no secret of it, but said right out that he'd die from ahead, the very first chains that come."

"He doesn't look like a man who would run from even such a danger," thoughtfully said Happy Jack.

"No more he would—without a fair cause," grinned Comstock, nodding toward the pavilion. "To do him justice, they ain't a more dand'ly devil man, nor a better Injun-fighter than him. But *thar's* the little gal kin take him into camp!"

"I feel sorry for her," was the scout's only reply. The subject of this brief conversation was seated beside a lady near the upper end of the pavilion. Tall, well-proportioned, dark and handsome, a finely-educated man with rare conversational powers, Captain Lawrence Stone was laying himself out to please the young lady beside him with an interest and ardor that he made no attempt to disguise from the eyes of those around. Indeed, so impressive did his air become that the lady arose and hastily approached the edge of the pavilion nearest the crowd. Captain Stone followed, a hot flush passing swiftly across his brow.

The unpollished though sincere praise of the scout had not been unfounded. Kate Markham, daughter of the colonel commanding, was indeed a beautiful woman. That she was barely up to



"That's enough, pard!" cried Happy Jack. "You mean well, but I don't need any man to fight my battles."

the middle bight, that her form was full and admirably symmetrical without being too plump, that she was a perfect brunette, with jetty-black hair, clear complexion, rosebud mouth and large, brilliant eyes; all this is easily said, but the words give only a faint and unsatisfactory idea of the reality. With each passing mood she seemed quite a different person—alike only in being charming, bewitching in all.

The hot blood, mantled her cheek as she felt the presence of the captain at her elbow, and as though dreading what he might intend saying, she hastily uttered:

"Pray—who is that gentleman talking to father?"

"Gentleman?" echoed Captain Stone, with a scarcely-disguised sneer. "Ah, perhaps you mean yonder fellow with the long hair?"

"I mean the gentleman with the golden curls—yes," replied Kate, with a provoking emphasis.

"That is Happy Jack, as men call him, a sort of scout or camp-follower, I believe. I fear though, Miss Kate, that few would recognize him by your description."

"Indeed! after such a proof of your blindness, I shall think twice before believing any more of your pretty speeches. Withal, exception he is the handsomest man I have seen in a year—and I'm going to ask papa for an introduction."

With a mischievous laugh, Kate Markham ran lightly down the broad steps and approached her parent, but if she really had such an idea, it was frustrated. With a military salute the scout turned away and rejoined his partner.

Colonel Markham greeted his petted—if not spoiled—child with a sunny smile that partly betrayed the deep, almost passionate love he felt for her parent, but if she really had such an idea, it was frustrated. With a military salute the scout turned away and rejoined his partner.

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convince you at any time or place you may choose to name. Meanwhile, if you have any doubts, you can settle them by one word with Colonel Markham. Here is the money—cover it, or own that you were talking just for the sake of hearing your own voice."

"You have said more than enough," replied Captain Stone, in a voice that trembled despite his iron nerves. "Lieutenant Blake, will you do us the honor to hold stakes? Thanks. I trust you are satisfied?" he added, abruptly turning to Happy Jack.

"Perfectly," bowed the scout.

"I hope you may be able to say as much by this time to-morrow," and with a little laugh the captain strode away toward the pavilion.

"You've stirred up an ugly devil, pard," earnestly said Comstock, as they turned away from the little crowd. "He's giv' his rattle; he'll not wait long afore strikin'!"

"At any other time or place he wouldn't have had time to do either," was the quiet reply. "He did not crowd us like that for nothing. I can't imagine his reasons, but I feel that he came here simply to pick a quarrel."

"I reckon he couldn't come to a better place for gettin' the full wuth o' his money," grinned Comstock.

"I'll do my best to satisfy him, at least. But now—about this bet; what is the saddle offered for?"

"The old trick—you remember the fun we had down Taos way! Pluckin' the cock—*el grito*."

"Old 'Paint' will do, then," muttered the scout, glancing toward a curiously-spotted mustang that stood near.

"I wouldn't like to trust Simoom in the scrimmage."

"You'll need a fast an' a good horse, sure. The cap'n is a born devil to ride, an' the tricks he can't know ain't wuth much. You'd better take my critter."

"No—old 'Paint' knows me better, and is plenty fresh enough. See! there goes the gallop of a horse with a choice companion for one who will bet only with gentlemen!"

"Injun Dan! the blackest thief unhung! I'd give a hoss to know jest what they're sayin'. Ha! I knowed it! they're goin' to saddle up. Good enough! I reckon I'll take a hand in the game."

"Then you think—"

"I think that ef Mister Injun Dan tries any o' his underhand tricks, he'll run ag'inst a snag. I won't interfere unless he does. You never mind him, but just keep an eye on the cap'n."

There was no time to say more, for the signal was blown for the contestants to appear before the judge's stand, where the rules governing "El Gallo" were briefly stated. A rooster was buried in the earth, leaving only its head and neck, both plentifully besmeared with grease, above ground. The competitors, their position being decided by drawing lots, were to ride one hundred yards at full gallop, bend in the saddle and endeavor to pluck the cock from its resting-place with naked hand. When one succeeded, all the others were at liberty to pursue and seek to wrest the trophy from him. All maneuvers were fair in which no weapon was used. A post was planted one-half mile distant from the bird. This must be rounded, and then the starting-point regained. The victor would be he who carried home the live bird; or, if torn to pieces in the *melee*, the one who could produce the cock's head.

Then the lots were drawn, and the sports began. Comstock was sixth, Happy Jack seventh, while Captain Stone was last, or the thirteenth man. None but crack riders had entered, few caring to risk their necks unless pretty confident in their skill.

At the blast of a bugle the foremost rider dashed off, passing close beside the buried rooster, stooping low in the saddle and making a grasp at the bird's neck; but in vain. The cock twisted its long neck to one side, and the baffled horseman flushed hotly as his ears tingled with the ironical cheers of the spectators, as, according to the rules, he swept round to assume a position in the rear of the competitors.

Again and again this was enacted with scarce a variation, though more than one of the riders succeeded in touching the bird's head, despite its dodging. Then Bill Comstock spurred forth, riding his tough little mustang like one born to the pig-skin. Differing from his predecessors, the scout lay along his mustang's side from the first, and sunk lower as he advanced until his right hand swept the ground for several yards before the bird was reached. Then he made his grasp, aiming not for the head of the bird, but rather at the point where its neck disappeared below the surface. The bird dodged, but the scout's eye was true, and a shower of sand arose as Comstock, with a wild yell, swung the fowl above his head.

But as many a man before him, the scout laughed out of time. The cock's head was small—it being a pet game-cock which one young but enthusiastic admirer of Miss Kate had contributed, poultry being anything but plenty at the hands of Comstock. Scarcely had it recovered its feet when Happy Jack was beside it, and stooping low, firmly grasped its legs, then sped toward the distant post, with a clear, ringing shout that thrilled the nerves of every contestant much as the picking of a banjo touches the strings of a day's heels.

Happy Jack rode in strict Indian fashion, without saddle or bridle, a scrap of buffalo-hide being securely strapped upon the spotted mustang's back. To the stout horse-hair girth were attached several stout loops, while the long mane was knotted together in a style decidedly more useful than ornamental. The use of these devices was speedily made manifest.

With loud shouts, the contestants rushed after the scout who was steadily nearing the turning-post. To all present it seemed as though Happy Jack was urging his mustang to its highest speed, yet he was rapidly being overhauled; but then Bill Comstock grinned broadly. He read the solution of Old Paint's sudden loss of speed.

Just before him rode the half-breed, Indian Dan, mercilessly lashing his big horse with a small coil of rawhide. On this Comstock kept his eye, believing as he did that Captain Stone had come to some understanding with the fellow that involved foul play. And a moment later he had the reward of his vigilance. He saw the savage quickly separate the twisted coils and stoop low in the saddle as his big horse forged alongside the scout, and giving his mustang the spur, Comstock glided forward, just in time to catch the bird as it came from the forefoot of Old Paint, but at the same moment a strong hand grasped his foot and hurled him violently from the saddle, completely felling him dastardly attempt.

Then it was that Happy Jack shone forth in all his glory as a consummate tactician and skilled horseman. He was surrounded upon all hands by eager horsemen, each grasping quickly at the fluttering cock, crowding and pressing around and bringing Old Paint almost to a standstill. Among all none seemed more eager than Bill Comstock, though one in the secret

would have seen that he was actually aiding Happy Jack, and urging the *melee* on toward the now near turning-post. Then it was that Old Paint played his part in genuine mustang style, biting, kicking and plunging furiously as the horses crowded him, all the time edging slowly but steadily toward the post. And Happy Jack—a dozen eyes could not have followed his motions. Now erect, holding the cock high above the wildly-gesticulating hands, now lying low upon Old Paint's back; again, hanging by one foot in a loop, his body almost touching the trampled sands, first on one side, then the other, and more than once slipping entirely to the ground when pressed too close; but all the time working his way toward the boundary, and never once losing his grasp upon the now loudly-squalling cock.

Then, for the first time, he called upon Old Paint, and right nobly the mustang responded, plunging ahead with an impetus that would not be denied, bursting clear through the crowd and sweeping around the boundary post. Happy Jack holding the cock aloft that all might see, then making a bold sweep over the prairie, the spotted mustang developing a burst of speed that astonished all who had rated him according to his first display.

Though now leading the race, Happy Jack saw that his work was not yet done. Just abreast him rode one man, who thus far had been contented with hanging upon the edge of the *melee*, though closely watching every move in the rapidly-shifting game. Keenly Happy Jack looked at the big, clean-limbed black, and uttered a low whistle that sent Old Paint forward as though hurled from a catapult. But the big black kept its distance, apparently without any extra effort. Indeed the taut reins told a plain story of more speed held in reserve.

The scout saw, too, that unless there was a speedy change, the two horses would come fairly together long before the goal was reached. Already the distance was so short that he could plainly read the sneering smile that curled Captain Stone's lips, and in that moment he knew that he would rather suffer death than defeat at the hands of such a man. Yet he dare not slacken his speed, for that would be to plunge again into the thick of the crowd, and his exertions were beginning to tell upon Old Paint, who had covered over a hundred miles within the last forty hours.

He had little time for thought. The goal was now close at hand, and Captain Stone could afford to dally no longer. He loosened the reins, and the big black was beside Old Paint almost at a bound. And in the instant that intervened, Happy Jack read the purpose of his rival.

He saw the devilish glitter in the stern black eyes, he read the vicious smile as the strong hand pulled hard upon the cruel curb. The black horse reared high in the air—the plunging madly forward as the reins were suddenly relaxed, his hoofs striking fairly upon the spotted mustang's back, just where Happy Jack had been sitting an instant before, crushing him to the earth, and almost losing its own footing.

A cry of horror arose from the gathering, as they saw the mustang go down—but then a wild, prolonged, and enthusiastic cheer arose, as they saw the scout leap from the ground and alight upon the black horse, directly behind the solidly-plunging madly forward as the reins were suddenly relaxed, his hoofs striking fairly upon the spotted mustang's back, just where Happy Jack had been sitting an instant before, crushing him to the earth, and almost losing its own footing.

Then the scout sprung lightly to the ground, with an absurdly polite bow to the almost suffocated captain, whose lips fairly frothed with rage and mortification.

### CHAPTER II.

WILD SPORTS OF THE PLAINS.

"GIVE me a knife—a pistol, somebody—quick!" snarled Captain Stone, fairly crazed by the loud cheers and peals of laughter that greeted the bold exploit of the scout. "Curse you! I'll tear your heart out!" and he sprang to the ground, striding toward the smiling scout, evidently bent on mischief.

"Here you've got it, cap'n," cried Bill Comstock, as he leaped between the two, confronting the infuriated officer with a cocked and leveled revolver. "Here's the bull-pup you was axin' fer—an' its bite means sudden death, too!"

"That's enough, pard!" cried Happy Jack, thrusting the scout aside with a strong hand. "You mean well, but I don't need any man to fight my battles."

"Down with that weapon, Comstock! down, I say, or your arm will be one hand the shorter!" rung out a stern, commanding voice, as Colonel Markham galloped to the spot, his saber flashing brightly. "And you, Captain Stone—a fine example you are setting the men! For shame, sir!"

"He insulted me—it was a foul trick—" "And how much better was your own conduct—or rather, how much worse! Bah! do you think to daunt me with your black looks? I watched you closely—I saw your every movement, and had you succeeded in your attempt, a man would be lying out yonder with a broken back, instead of that poor horse. No reply, sir; consider yourself lucky that I do not order you under guard for attempted murder."

"It was but the fortune of war, colonel," interposed Happy Jack. "If I am content to pass it by, surely there need no more be said."

"If my conduct needs any defense, it will not be made through your lips," said Captain Stone, suddenly recovering his usual self-possession. "Lieutenant Blake, you will please cancel that debt. And now, sir," he continued, as the money stake was placed in the scout's hands, "one word with you in private."

"Not another word!" firmly cried Colonel Markham. "Captain Stone, you will come with me."

For an instant the eager spectators believed that the captain was about to give an angry refusal, but they were disappointed. Saluting stiffly, Captain Stone followed his superior officer to the pavilion.

"I come mighty nigh playin' the fool, 'jest then, old man," said Comstock, "an' I'd a' let daylight clean through the critter, ef you hadn't ketchin' my arm."

"You mean well, Bill, I know that; but I'd rather fight my own battles, all the same, I







## AN IDYL OF THE PAST.

BY WILLI M. TENNYSON HEATON.

The sunset kissed the yellow hill,  
In the v of the first star shone,  
Twilight shrouded off and mill,  
And darkened hall and home,  
From o'er the wave the vesper bell  
Rung forth the hour of prayer—  
On the tower the moonlight fell,  
And on the stony stair.

The wind swept up the river plain—  
A gentle summer breeze—  
Crept along the winding lane,  
And o'er the dewy leas.  
Around my heart the shadows fell—  
Only a word—  
But sadder seemed that last farewell  
Than a farewell to the dead!

## Wife or Widow?

OR,

## ETHELIND ERLE'S ENEMY.

BY RETT WINWOOD.

AUTHOR OF "A GIRL'S HEART," "A DANGEROUS WOMAN," "THE WRONGED HEIRESS," ETC.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## INVESTIGATIONS.

"A moment stop! my lord, my lord,  
Spare him—I kneel to you and wet the ground  
With tears."  
—BARRY CORNWALL.

Poor Dolores passed an anxious and sleepless night after the commission of her husband for trial.

About nine o'clock the next morning, having dressed herself in a suit of plain black, and put on her bonnet and shawl, she was about to leave the house when Aunt Jerry stalked out of the drawing-room, and planted herself directly in the way.

"Where are you going?" she demanded, in a curt tone.

"To visit my husband."

Aunt Jerry drew herself up with an angry snort.

"Your husband?" she sneered. "That wretch is no more your husband than I am. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Dolores Gloyne."

Dolores bit her lip, and made an effort to pass on; but again she was intercepted.

"Stay where you are, you rebellious child. With my consent, you shall never pass out of that door bound on such a reprehensible errand."

"It is my duty to go," said Dolores, gently but firmly.

"Duty!" shrieked Aunt Jerry. "It is your duty to yield obedience to those who are older and wiser than yourself. Go back to your room, miss."

"I cannot. My husband expects me; I must go to him."

"I forbid you to go."

"But you have no authority to control my actions. I owe submission to none save my God and my dear husband."

Aunt Jerry trembled with passion.

"Girl, is it your deliberate purpose to defy me?" she raved.

"No, I have no wish to do that," said Dolores, still speaking in a calm and gentle voice, though there was a flash of fire in her brilliant dark eyes.

"But you should not usurp authority that does not rightfully belong to you. If you do, I have no resource but to rebel."

There was a silence. Suddenly Aunt Jerry caught hold of the girl's hand—her own was cold as ice—and saying "Come with me," in a dry, hard voice, drew her forward into the drawing-room. All that was mortal of Egbert Challoner lay there waiting for the last sad rites, which were to be performed at a later hour of that same day. The burial had been postponed as long as possible that Raymond might be present and superintend arrangements himself.

Aunt Jerry drew the shrinking girl close up to the coffin, which stood in the middle of the darkened room.

"Look there!" she said, in a raised voice, uncovering the face of the dead. "Look at your poor, murdered grandfather, and then go to the wretch who assassinated him if you have the heart to do it!"

Dolores burst into tears.

"Don't, Aunt Jerry. You shock and distress me. My burden is heavier than I can well bear, already."

Struggling clear of those relentless hands, Dolores hurried back to the hall, and sinking on a chair, gave way to a perfect storm of sorrow.

"You do feel ashamed of yourself—that is evident," said Aunt Jerry, grimly, for she had followed the girl out.

"No, it isn't that. But a trouble like this is so horrible. Sometimes I almost give way. But Vincent is innocent of poor grandpa's death! Did I not believe this from the depths of my soul I should shrink from him in as great horror as you do."

"Poor fool! Did not the murdered man's very last words fix the crime upon that villain?"

"It was a mistake—a dreadful mistake," shivered poor Dolores. "There was no light in the room, and grandpa must have taken some one else for Vincent."

"Poor deluded fool!"

"I would stake my life on his innocence, and have told him so."

"You intend to cling to him in spite of everything?"

"I do."

"Mad girl! It is a wonder that your murdered relative does not rise out of his coffin to reproach you."

Dolores resolutely wiped away her tears.

"Appearances are very much against my husband," she said, very low. "But that is no reason why I should condemn him. Some day, this mystery will be cleared up, and I shall try to be patient until that time comes."

And before Aunt Jerry could raise another objection, Dolores had quietly stepped past, and left the house.

Like all gentle, loving women, she listened not to the voice of reason, but to that of her heart. In spite of the damning evidence against him, it was simply impossible for her to believe Vincent guilty of the heinous crime laid to his charge.

She found him pacing the floor of his cell, pale but calm. He had already had an interview with Mr. Nolan, the attorney who had been secured to defend him, and the man had just gone away with the frank admission that the case promised to be the most difficult one he had ever handled.

At the sight of his wife, however, the prisoner attempted to banish every appearance of concern from his manner and countenance; and embracing her, said cheerfully:

"You come into my cell like a sunbeam, Dolores, only you are a little paler."

"I have brought you a little package," said Dolores, speaking in a hurried tone, to hide her agitation. "Here it is," and taking a roll of bank-notes from her pocket she spread them on the little table under the window.

"Why, where did you get so much money?" Vincent asked, in a tone of surprise.

"It was intrusted to me by your sister Ethelind before she went away, yesterday afternoon. She said this would secure a great many comforts that you might otherwise be compelled to do without. And she wished me to urge upon you the necessity of employing the very best counsel in the State for your defense. Her purse is at your command."

"Heaven bless her!" cried the poor prisoner, in a tone of deep emotion. "I know she would do anything for the world to help me."

Then, forcing a smile, he added:

"I feel very rich, darling. See, I can duplicate the sum you have brought, note by note."

So indeed he could. For, producing a second roll very similar in appearance to the first, he placed a note of like denomination upon each of those Dolores had laid down.

Looking into her wondering eyes, he said:

"This is Colonel Falkner's gift. He pushed the money into my hand when he came to see good-by."

"I am very glad."

Before she could add another word, the cell-door was opened, and the warden ushered in a small, quiet-looking man who proved to be none other than our old friend, Detective Ferret.

When the warden had withdrawn, and Vincent turned to greet the detective, Dolores placed herself beside him and said, eagerly:

"I intended this as a surprise, my love. I sent for Mr. Ferret, and have secured his services that the mysterious crime for which you suffer may be thoroughly investigated."

"Thank you, Dolores. It was, perhaps, the wisest thing you could have done."

Mr. Ferret quietly helped himself to a chair.

"What defense did you offer at the examination, Mr. Ferret?" he said, fixing his light gray eyes upon the young man's face.

"None, except to put in the plea of 'not guilty,' and assure the magistrate and jury that I had left Mr. Challoner's grounds immediately after parting with Dolores, and had set out for Glenoaks without a moment's delay."

"What proof did you offer to substantiate your statement?"

"Alas, I had none save my simple word."

The detective appeared to ruminate for some time. At length he said:

"You may tell everything you can remember that has any bearing upon the events of that fatal night."

Vincent and Dolores, together, were enabled to give Mr. Ferret a very clear idea of the events that had already come to light. The two points in which he manifested particular interest, however, were those of Madam Zoe's mysterious disappearance, and the fact that Aunt Jerry had encountered a woman in the corridor when she was hurrying down-stairs after having been aroused by the cries of the murdered man.

"Where do the friends of this Madam Zoe reside?" he inquired.

"I do not know," Dolores answered; "but it is my belief that she resided in the South before coming to Dingle Dell."

"Who recommended her to Mr. Challoner?"

"She brought no testimonials. I have heard Aunt Jerry say. In the first place, she was taken on trial; but her duties were performed in a manner so satisfactory that she was permanently engaged."

"Did she never allude to her former life?"

"Never. Indeed she seemed averse to speaking of it even to answer such questions as might, from time to time, be asked."

"Of course she received letters occasionally from her friends?"

"No, sir. None ever came for her."

"That is strange," said the detective, in a musing tone.

"It is believed by some," said Dolores, looking up quickly, "that Madam Zoe could give important testimony in this case, and has withdrawn herself for that very reason."

"Humph!" muttered Mr. Ferret, shaking his head.

When he left the prison, however, he went directly to the railway station, and inquired for the night-agent. The man could throw no light upon the mystery, however. He had been at his post the night in question, but was certain that no lady had purchased a ticket of him, though several gentlemen had done so.

"How far is it to the next station?" Mr. Ferret inquired.

"Four miles," he replied.

"Above or below?"

"Below."

Mr. Ferret hurried to the nearest livery-stable, and hired a boy to drive him down. Having reached his destination, and found the station-agent, the first question was this:

"Do all the night-trains stop here?"

"Yes, sir," was the ready answer. "They take in wood and water at this point."

"How many night-trains are there?"

"Four, all told, sir—that is, I mean two each way," replied the station-agent, a big, rough-looking fellow who seemed to be something of a gossip.

"They pass each other here."

"At what hours?"

"Ten in the evening and four in the morning."

A great many people take tickets from this station, I suppose?"

"Well, not so very many, sir," said the man, scratching his head. "Such as do, come, for the most part, from the village one mile below, down in the hollow. Some days there are half a dozen; and very often, at night, there's nobody."

"Can you tell me if there was anybody to take the four o'clock train, Tuesday morning?"

"Tuesday? Let me see! That was the morning after poor old Mr. Challoner was murdered."

"Yes, I believe so."

"Why, bless you, sir, there were two, that morning, and cur's customers they were, too. Never opened their heads to speak to a body, if they could help it."

"Men?"

"No, sir, a man and a woman. The man was all muffled up about his face. He rushed up, just as the train was ready to start, threw down his money and asked, in a squeaky voice, for a ticket to B—."

"I gave him one, and he climbed onto the rear car just as the train was moving off."

"Did the woman go by the same train?"

"No, sir. She went in the opposite direction; and I should have told you about her afore, for she was the first to leave. She came in all alone, about three, and inquired about the train. She said a few words, and then went out; and of course I stepped to the door and looked after her. She was walking up and down the railroad track, sir, as if she was on a wagger."

"Did you see her face?" asked Mr. Ferret, eagerly.

"I did not. She was dressed in black, and had her veil down. I don't think she was a young woman, sir; but she was straight as a sapling for all that. She purchased no ticket, but I saw her get aboard the down-train. There was something cur'ous about that woman, sir."

The detective was of the same opinion; but he merely said:

"Have you any grounds for thinking that the man and woman were acquaintances?"

"Not the slightest, sir, and what's more, I don't think so. The down-train leaves some three or four minutes before the other; and so far as I know the woman came and was gone before the man got here at all."

Mr. Ferret said nothing more, but he mentally decided that the whole circumstance was a very singular one.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## COLONEL FALKNER'S PERPLEXITY.

"Who that hath ever been,  
Could bear to be no more,  
Yet who would tread again the scene  
He trod through life before."  
—MONTGOMERY.

The night was hot and still. Scarce a breath of air ruffled the foliage of the dark old trees that drooped lovingly over the gray walls of Glenoaks. The atmosphere seemed heavy and oppressive.

Until a late hour Colonel Philip Falkner sat in the small room on the ground floor that had been fitted up for a private study, poring over legal documents and reports of famous trials. He hoped to gather from these papers some hint that might be useful to Vincent; for though there were doubts in his own mind of the young man's innocence, he did not wish to see him suffer the full penalty of the law.

Rising languidly at length, as if wearied out with his long sitting, Colonel Falkner proceeded to the open window, and after standing there a moment, stepped out. The crimson curtains fell together behind him, and the lamp that still

burned within was the only indication that the room had been inhabited at all that evening.

Gray, leaden clouds covered the whole heavens like a pall. Even the night-birds were still; and the heavy, oppressive scent of flowers filled the air almost to faintness.

Curious, once into the shrubbery, Colonel Falkner walked thoughtfully on in the direction of the sea. He had not proceeded far, however, when he saw some dark object flit swiftly from one group of evergreens to another, and pause there as if to rest or reconnoiter, though in all movements there was an evident desire to shun observation.

"It is Ethelind," he thought. "Rash girl! She should not be wandering abroad at this hour of the night."

Sheltering himself behind a convenient trellis, he waited for the dark figure to come nearer. Several minutes elapsed before it moved at all, and then, as if in a sudden accession of courage, it started up and glided swiftly past within three or four yards of Colonel Falkner's hiding-place.

To his intense surprise, the figure did not prove to be Ethelind's after all, but that of a strange lady dressed in black, whose head and face were closely muffled in a thick veil.

She glided on rapidly in the direction of the house; and Colonel Falkner, startled, perplexed and curious, immediately turned and followed her, taking care to keep in the shadow and so far behind as not to attract her attention.

The mysterious lady made her way directly toward the window of the study, where the light still burned brightly behind the closely-drawn curtains, and, right before him, she stood for some time motionless, her head bowed, as if either listening or praying.

Colonel Falkner stole a few steps nearer, feeling more bewildered than ever. Suddenly the woman flung up her hands wildly, and a subdued wail came from her lips.

"Oh, Philip, pity me! My heart is breaking!"

Something in that low, thrilling voice caused Colonel Falkner to start as though he had received an electric shock. It sounded familiar, and she had spoken his name! What did it mean?

Did she know under whose window she stood, and was she there simply because it was his?

His heart beat a little faster, but he sprang forward, and caught the woman by the arm.

"Who are you?" he sternly demanded.

There was no answer save a low, frightened moan, and she seemed to shrink away from him as if in deadly terror.

"What are you doing here? Speak!"

In another instant he would have torn away the muffling veil, but the woman eluded the movement, and wrenching her arm from his grasp, darted swiftly past, and fled, with a shrill cry into the darkest and densest of the shrubbery.

Colonel Falkner followed, but he could not overtake her. The black dress she wore blended naturally with the shadows that everywhere peopled the grounds, and at the distance of a few rods she was completely lost to observation.

He hesitated at last in sheer despair, and at the same instant a bitter, mocking laugh sounded beside him.

"You do well to give up the pursuit, Colonel Falkner. That woman is fleet of foot than yourself—you cannot overtake her."

It was Ethelind's voice, and looking round in astonishment, he saw the girl standing just beyond him, her white, wasted features dimly distinguishable in the uncertain light.

"Ethelind!"

"Yes, it is I! You need not look so shocked."

"It is enough to shock me to find you roaming about at midnight. Are you mad?"

She passed both hands quickly over her forehead.

"Mad? Yes, I have been delirious these many weeks."

"Poor child," he said, in a tone of infinite pity. "I believe you."

"Then my vagaries should no longer astonish you."

"They pain me, Ethelind, deeply pain and grieve me. But you must not remain here. Take my arm, and I will lead you back to the house."

The obeyed, submissively as a little child, and not another word was spoken until he had drawn her through the open window, and they stood within the little study, when the lamplight fell on her pallid face and burning eyes.

"Now tell me why you were in the grounds?" he said.

"I could not sleep, and felt too nervous to remain in-doors," she answered, without looking at him. "Was it a greater crime for me to seek the fresh air than for you?"

"At least it is scarcely decorous for a young lady to be wandering about at midnight."

"I regret having offended against your notions of propriety," said Ethelind; but her tone was proud and cold.

Colonel Falkner remained silent for a moment, his eyes bent fixedly upon the girl's face. Suddenly he heaved a sigh, and said in a changed voice:

"You, too, saw that strange woman I was pursuing?"

"I did."

"Who is she?"

"Do you not know?" Ethelind asked, quickly, meeting his gaze now for the first time.

"I have not the slightest suspicion."

"Then I can give you the necessary information. I saw her first, and I followed her to your drawing-room with a half-suppressed cry of amazement."

"What! the new tenant of Lorn?"

"The very same."

"Indeed! I wonder that I did not think of her long ago. I have been told that Mrs. Faunce always goes abroad muffled up very much like the woman in question."

"I am not her confidant," was the haughty answer.

"It seems very singular," he went on, as if she had not spoken. "I cannot make it out. Mrs. Faunce! The name is not a familiar one. And yet—"

Ethelind waited to hear no more. Her first impulse had been to tell him of that first visit Mrs. Faunce had paid to his chamber while he lay ill of the wound he had received. But she would not yield to it. Shaking away from him, she glided, without another word, from the room.

"If Mrs. Faunce loves him, and wishes to keep that love a secret, I have no right to betray her," she thought. "I have been told that Mrs. Faunce always goes abroad muffled up very much like the woman in question."

He spoke in a slow, dreamy tone, like one whose thoughts were busy.

"Yes, I know why Mrs. Faunce came here," he asked abruptly, after a pause.

"I am not her confidant," was the haughty answer.

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## 1482.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH.

## My Arab Angel.

## A Story of the Great Syrian Desert.

BY COL. DELLE SARA.

Some time elapsed before I recovered my senses. When I came to it was broad daylight and I found myself reclining on a sumptuous couch in an apartment well furnished after the Eastern style; my arm had been placed in a sling, refreshments were on a low stool by my couch, and a few paces from my bedside, reclining on an ottoman, was as fair a dusky maid as ever my eyes had looked upon.

under the peculiar circumstances I felt a little embarrassed; but this child of nature never took the least notice of my hesitation, but proceeded coolly on in her speech:

## A MESSAGE

BY E. Z. WAY

## Madcap, the Little Quaker

# Madcap,

## The Little Quakeress:

OR,  
THE NAVAL CADET'S WOOING.

**A Romance of the Best Society of the Penn. City.**

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN,  
AUTHOR OF "BLACK EYES AND BLUE," "WAR  
OF HEARTS," "BRAVE BARBARA," ETC.

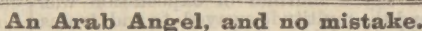
## CHAPTER VII.

## FORTUNE-TELLING.

MEANTIME the beggar to whom he had given alms with a recommendation to her to seek some place of shelter immediately, seemed in no hurry to get out of the cold and coming darkness; she continued to sit where she was, pretty thoroughly protected by her thick shawl, drawn over head and ears, until the lamplighter set the gas to blazing in a lamp in front of her; then she arose and crawled up to the door, ring-

"Why don't you go to the basement door?" asked the servant, sharply, on seeing only an old beggar-woman before him.

"Because I have business with your new mis-



voted followers, whether she remains the widow Schenck or becomes the stepmother of the dazzling blonde who now does the honors of Don Cameron's mansion."

"Well, come in here with me. Let me see, how much you know about the future."

"I can assure you that which you have already; and I can fix your title to money and

behind soft blue draperies so as to appear part of the wall—dropped off her ugly shawl and stood before the heiress looking quite another

class; but as if energy and ambition of spirit had raised her above the station in which she was born. Myra thought her a person to be feared as well as admired.

"I have been having my fortune told!" said Myra, gayly, as she went in to dinner an hour later. "I found Ethel there alone, with the

"Myra is a giddy thing, for a girl of her age," she thought, seeing how the mere flattery of a

CHAPTER VIII.

But this servant, for some reason, chose to remain with her. She was a young person who

Ethel felt that insolent manner most keenly. She had lost father, lover, fortune, and now she had to bear this assumption of superiority on the part of this girl whom she had loved and cherished as a sister when Myra was penniless.

Everything prospered with little Myra. Everything which went to make up the sum of Ethel's trouble went to *her* aggrandizement.

more purchased for her when she could be coaxed to say she admired. The old ladies had new dove-colored satins, of so solid a texture that they would "stand alone," in preparation, to be worn at the ceremony. There was a diadem of pearls in course of construction, and

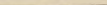
joy and beauty—from loving aunts and worshipping lover—from the bridal jewels and the bridal feast.

The whole city was startled.

The Misses Featherflight, mercifully for them,

Many a time that winter did those poor old ladies go to view the dead and swollen body of some woman "found drowned"—some young creature who might lately have been as pretty

"Fool that I was!" he said to himself, with a





sinking of the heart, "to be duped into letting her go! It was all a ruse on his part, taking the car. Doubtless she returned to the river as soon as she could, unobserved, and threw herself in! I saw self-murder in her white face. I almost feel as if her death lays at my door. Evelyn did, indeed, feel terribly agitated in recalling that, perhaps if he had persisted in watching her, he might have saved a human life. But, it would do no good to brood over the unrecalled. He was to start at noon, on a steamer bound for Havana, and on which his passage was already taken, and his curious errand—like that of some medieval knight—of righting the wrongs of his fair lady.

Surely, his impulse and his purpose were as pure and gallant as those of any planned knight who ever fought in a maiden's cause. Webster Evelyn might never have taken the fancy of a romantic girl, like one of those graceful heroes of the tournament, as he stepped out of Mr. Dobell's office, buttoning about his tall figure his frayed overcoat; but at heart he was the noblest of noble cavaliers.

He set out on his search with absolutely no clew to what he sought, except the fact that Cyrill Wainwright had married a Cuban lady, in such a year; and had returned on such an other year, saying that he was a widower, and bringing with him a little girl of two years, who, he said, was his daughter, and always treated as such until the day of his death; but whom, in his will, he declared not to be his daughter, and so had disinherited her.

It had seemed strange to Mr. Dobell, when he first set out to make inquiries about Mr. Wainwright's early life, that in reality his most intimate friends knew so little on the subject. Everything had been taken for granted.

Cyrill Wainwright had been an only child; his father had been a highly-respected merchant of the city, and had sent his son, at the age of twenty-three, down to Cuba, to attend to some sugar interests which he had there.

Cyrill's nearest friends could not recall, when questioned, that his father had died while the son was in Cuba; that Cyrill was said to have married the daughter of a wealthy planter; that he had been called home on the death of his father, and had returned, in deep distress, having also lost his wife, not a month before, and that he brought with him his child, little Ethel; and had, from that time on, lived quietly in his Philadelphia home, devoted to his daughter, and the memory of his wife who had died in her youth, and for whom he never again married. That when his brother failed in business, and afterward died, he invited his brother's daughter, Myra, to share his home, and be a companion for Ethel.

It was a suspicious point that, on questioning Ethel, she could not recall her mother's name, and that there was no record of it among Mr. Wainwright's papers.

Mr. Dobell had been forced to the conclusion that Ethel's appearance on the stage was due to some love-affair in which the young merchant had become entangled with some one below him in the social scale; that he might, indeed, have even misrepresented the real character of his alliance in order to bring home this child as his own; but, why, in that case he should have brought her to the stage, and why, as his daughter and heiress, puzzled the lawyer.

Of course, he had not betrayed his suspicions to Ethel.

It was this fact that Mr. Wainwright had always treated the girl as his daughter and legal heir, which fastened itself in Evelyn's mind.

He loved that unhappy, disinherited young lady. For the love he bore her, in silence and without return, he had resolved to do all that a sharp, patient lawyer could do, to ascertain what her position really was, and to look for some good reason for an attempt to break the will and restore to her what she had lost.

And so he sailed for Cuba without even the encouragement of feeling that she wished any one to interfere.

When the New Year came in, Evelyn was in Cuba, Coralie Clyde was as completely lost as if she had soared to the sky, and John Garwell, in the desperate necessities of his situation, was devoting himself to a woman whom he despised far more than he loved Myra Wainwright.

Coralie's flight had placed him in an awkward and uneasy plight. The creditors whom he had silenced with fair promises came about him again like a swarm of wasps. His father, to whom some of them had appealed, was very angry with him; would not advance ten dollars beyond the sum necessary for his daily wants, and even threatened to turn him out of his house. In this desperate plight he naturally recalled the flattering preference of Miss Myra for himself.

He had fancied sweet little Coralie well enough to be satisfied to compel her to become his wife; but the vain, selfish Myra he had studied and fathomed only to despise. However—something had to be done! Behold him, on New Year's evening at her feet!

Scarcely two weeks since Coralie's disappearance, yet he was already the suitor of another and wealthier lady!

That first day of the New Year had been a long, miserable day to Ethel. As when she first saw her standing by the window in the first agony of her father's illness, so she stood now, for hours—a little back from the view of the hundreds of "callers" who thronged that fashionable street—staring, with strange, bright, feverish eyes at the glittering equipages rolling by. This gay, outside world was so changed to her from what it had been, a year ago!

She knew that John Garwell came often to see Myra. She now knew him as he was—an unprincipled man; but it is almost as hard to root out a dead love as a living one; and to tempt the traitor from her warm, tender, human heart gave her many a fierce pang, notwithstanding her respect for him was dead.

Very sadly and wisely she looked on, wondering at Myra more even than at him; for she knew that her cousin was not deceived in his character or motives. She did not know that Myra long had loved him, with a passionate, reckless devotion which some persons can give to a single object, while they are hard and selfish to all the rest of the world.

John Garwell had opened the one sweet fountain in Myra's spirit; for him it shone clear and full.

The brief wintry afternoon of New Year's day stole swiftly on. The Wainwrights, owing to their mourning, did not receive.

A servant came to call Miss Ethel to the five o'clock dinner. She was cold and pale, and had eaten nothing since breakfast; but she felt as if the sight of the table, with Myra at its head, would be hateful to her; so she lingered a few minutes where she was; then went slowly down the broad stairs; but, when she reached the main hall it required more firmness than she had left to keep on to the dining-room.

She turned and entered the little boudoir back of the double drawing-rooms. It was dark there, and peaceful. The windows of the boudoir faced the west. Through the parted long silken curtains came the light of a just-risen full moon, whose silver radiance struggled coldly with the warm flush of sunset. Ethel, cowering down her tears—lonely, desolate, sick of life—slipped in here, went to one of the windows, dropped the heavy curtains behind her, and stood there a long, long time, in a dream-world illuminated by moonlight—like a world once, as June, but ghastly and frozen now, like the poor rose-bushes which rattled their icy branches against the pane.

"Alone! alone! Oh, I wish I were dead!" whispered her dry lips, as she lifted her beautiful, pallid face—like a marble in that silver light—to the far-off heaven.

Poor Ethel! she knew nothing of the one brave, earnest heart which loved her with true, manly love—the love that protects, that reveres, that works for the poor young lawyer who was thought to the poor young lawyer who was serving her, or trying to serve her, with his best effort.

Absorbed in her own intense emotions, she did not hear or see the entrance of two people into the moonlit boudoir.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 412.)

## UNCLE REMUS'S CORN-SHUCKING SONG.

"OH! GO 'WAY, SINDY ANN!"

BY J. C. HARRIS.

Oh, de fus' news you know de day'll be a-breakin' (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
An' de fier be a-burnin' an' de ash-cake a-bakin', (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
An' de ben'll be a-bollerin' an' de boss'll be a-wakin' (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Better git up, nigger, an' give yo' self a-shakin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Oh, honey! w'en you see dem ripe stars a-fallin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Oh, honey! w'en you hear de rain-crow-a-cawin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Oh, honey! w'en you hear dem little pigs a-rootin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Den de day-time a-comin', a-creepin' an' a-drawin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

CHORUS.

Fer de los' ell-an'-yard iz a-huntin' for de mornin', (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
An' she'll catch up widus' to 'er ever git dis corn in— (Oh, go 'way, Sindy Ann!)

Oh, honey! w'en you hear dat tin horn a-tootin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Oh, honey! w'en you hear de squinch-owl a-scootin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Oh, honey! w'en you hear dem little pigs a-rootin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Right den she's a-comin', a-skippin' an' a-scootin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Oh, honey! w'en you hear dat roan mule whicker— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
W'en you see Mister Moon turnin' pale an' gettin' sicker— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Den she's time fer to handle dat corn a little quicker— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Ef you wanten git a smell uv ole Master's jug er licter— (Hey O! Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

You niggers ober dar! You better stop your dan-cin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
No use fer to be a-dancin' on a month b'fore in— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
No use fer to come a-fingin' uv yo' 'can'ta' in— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Kaze dey ain't no time for yo' puttin' on yo' prancin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Mister Rabbit see de fox an' he sass um an' he jaws um— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Mister Fox ketch de rabbit, an' he scratch um an' he claws um— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
An' he 'tar off de hide, an' he chaws um an' he gnaws um— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Same like gal chawin' sweet gum an' rozzum— (Hey O! Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Oh, work on, boys! give dese shucks a mighty ring-in'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
'Fore de boss come aroun' a-dancin' an' a-dingin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Git up an' move aroun'! set dem big han's ter swingin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Up'n down de Bang!)  
Git up'n shout loud! let de white folks hear you singin'— (Hey O! Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

## The Poisoned Apple.

BY W. J. HAMILTON.

THE feast was high in Camelot, and the knights of King Arthur, around that magical board which the skill of Merlin reared, drank to the health of Arthur and the peerless Queen Guinevere.

The stainless king, as he looked down the line of noble faces, felt that his work had been well done. In all that fair assembly there was not one knight who had not earned his place by deeds of prowess with lance, sword, mace or battle-axe. There Sir Lancelot in Lao, the knight so matchless in arms, who had but one stain upon his honor; Gawaine, ready of wit, brave as a lion, second only to Lancelot and the king; Tristram, whose mournful eyes seemed looking ever across the narrow seas to Cornwall's coast, where dwelt Isoud the Fair; Pellinore, derring-do, and many more, the least the peer of kings and princes of any other land.

On the right hand of the queen sat a guest from Scotland, a man reputed valiant as the best, who had come on a strange errand. Men said that, leagued with Modred, the evil brother of King Arthur, he sought to trail the fame of Guinevere in the dust, and from time to time her glorious eyes fell on him with a strange, intent look, as if she would have read his very soul.

"I make you welcome, Sir Hector," she said, at last. "Men speak well of thy valor, and ere you turn again to the hills of Scotland, I fain would see splintering of lances between thee and our valiant knights, and we be many."

"I will meet them as I may, fair queen," he said; "the best can do no more."

The queen looked down the board, and saw near her hands, upon a silver dish, a heap of beautiful apples. Selecting one, as a mark of favor, she laid it in the hand of Sir Hector. "Thus has been taught to love the simple fruit of the earth," she said. "Take this from my hand, fair knight."

The rugged Scotchman looked at the fruit with a strange gaze, and then he turned to the queen and said, "The fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, as our legends say," he answered. "With this our first mother tempted Adam; and certes, Eve was not fairer than thou, my queen."

The feast went on, and the knight ate the apple given him by the queen. All at once there came a horrible gurgling cry, and Sir Hector was seen upon his feet, clutching at his throat, as if choking.

"Poisoned!" he cried. "My death lie heavy on you, traitress; by your hand I die."

"No, no!" cried Guinevere. "As I live by bread I knew not of this."

"False!" cried the dying knight. "I call all here to witness that by the hand of Queen Guinevere I am guilly slain."

The words had scarcely passed his lips when, with a horrible convulsion, he fell upon his face. Many ran to him, but when his face was turned to the light they saw that all was over. Sir Hector was dead.

"False queen!" cried Modred, ever ready to do any evil; "this good knight spoke the truth, for many here saw you place the apple in his hand."

"I did, I did!" was the reply; "but God is my judge that I knew nothing of it."

At this moment the clash of arms was heard, and a knight of noble presence, preceded by a herald, strode into the hall. All recognized the blazon which he bore, the mountain cat leaping on his prey, and knew that he was the house of Sir Hector. As he threw up his visor he revealed a haughty face, very like that of the man who lay dead beside the great table.

He was about to speak, when his eyes rested upon that dead face, which, with its protruding tongue and staring eyes, seemed to mock him.

"I come in good time, oh my brother," he cried, falling on his knees beside the body. "I was warned that evil would come to us here. Now I see that evil, cold and dead; but I at least I may avenge thee."

He bounded to his feet with an ominous clash of arms, and turned to King Arthur, stretching out his mailed and sinewy arm.

"Hear, oh king!" he cried; "hear, ye knights of Arthur's court. Evil was the hour when my brother Hector, trusting to your honor, set foot on this unhallowed floor. My brother's blood cries for justice, and justice I will have, if I take it by the strong hand."

"Justice shall thou have, Sir Evan," replied the king; "even though the proof should strike

down one dearer to me than life itself. Break up the banquet! To the hall of judgment!"

"Lay hands upon her first," said Modred, sternly. "I accuse her, that murderess, Queen Guinevere, with the death of this good knight, Sir Hector of Liddesdale."

"Let no man accuse her save myself," shouted Sir Evan, who had been speaking in a hurried tone to Modred. "This noble prince will bear me witness, and I am ready to do battle to the death with any man, your best and bravest, who dares say that she hath not slain my brother by poison."

"To the judgment-hall!" repeated Arthur, proudly. "If this be proved, I have no queen, and she is nothing more to me than any common malefactor. Crouch I say, to judgment!"

They passed through the lofty halls of the castle, followed by a dozen men-at-arms who led among them the accused. Her face was ghastly pale, for, innocent or guilty, she saw but too well that it would be hard to prove that she had not slain the knight. In the great judgment-hall sat the twelve lawgivers, and in the center rose the great throne upon which King Arthur sat when giving judgment. The face of the noble king was set in stern resolve as he went up the dais and seated himself in the place of honor.

"Place the accused at the bar!" he said, and the shrinking queen, with her golden hair falling about her in a rippling flow, and her pale face fast down, led forward.

"Who to accuse this woman?" demanded King Arthur. "Let him speak."

Sir Evan advanced. "I, Evan of Liddesdale, prince in my own realm, do avow on my knightly honor that Queen Guinevere hath slain my brother by poison. And this I will uphold, with lance, mace, or dagger, under knightly shield, against any man who dares to say that she is innocent, even the king himself."

"Sir Evan," was the proud reply. "I sit here as judge, and do not do battle for those accused of foul crimes. Doubtless, if she is innocent, God will raise her up a champion; if guilty, let her bear the blame and punishment."

"Thus I accuse her, oh king," cried Evan of Liddesdale, and then he turned to the king and let for him to lift who dares to take the sword for a foul murderer."

Sir Lancelot had already taken a step to raise the glove, when Modred spoke: "Touch it not, Sir Lancelot. I demand from the king that he withhold the sword from any knight as the queen, shall not take up the sword for her."

"It is just," said the king, coldly. "Go, Sir Lancelot, you may not be her champion."

Lancelot looked with at the king, and reading the stern resolution in his eyes, he turned a cry of pain, and fled from the judgment-hall, like one demented.

"See, see!" cried Modred. "Thus the guilty fly before their accusers."

"Be silent, my brother," commanded the king. "Speak, Guinevere; what say you to the charge?"

"I am innocent, oh king," she cried. "I had no hand in the death of this knight."

The king inclined his head slowly, and ordered the king to sit down from the room, who he consulted with the judges. Not long after he was brought in, and the king pronounced judgment.

"This is the sentence of your judges, Guinevere," he said, in a sad tone. "From the morning till the setting of the sun, you will stand at the stake with the fagots piled about you. If a champion appears in your behalf, well; if not, when the sun goes down, the hand of the executioner shall light the pile. God aid you, and give you a champion!"

The morning came, bright and fair, and in the open plain outside the walls of Camelot, where the jousts were held, the fated queen stood bound to the stake. All about her, in a great circle, held back by the lists, was a vast multitude, waiting for the end.

It was growing late, and as the sun slanted on his face, sat upon his throne at one side of the lists. At the upper end Sir Evan had set up his shield before his tent, waiting for the man who dared to strike it in defense of Guinevere, while he, Sir Hector, armed at all points, ready to do battle.

The day wore on, the sun passed meridian, and yet no man had dared to lift the hand in the cause of the accused. Nearly all believed her guilty, some doubted only, and not one had sufficient faith in her innocence to take up arms in her behalf, since Lancelot had been driven away.

Guinevere, in agony, looked at the declining sun. Guilty or innocent, she had hoped that the sweet face, and the kindly kindness she had shown to many, would have earned her one friend. But at this time, not one of the family of Lancelot or her own brothers, were in or near Camelot, and so strong was the suspicion that she had not one friend.

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haughty gesture to them to stand aside, she approached her champion.

"Sir Knight," she said, "faithful among the faithful, I must see thy face."

The stranger threw off his helmet clasp, and without raising his visor, hurled the helmet suddenly aside. Guinevere gave a cry of joy, and sprang into his waiting arms, for in her champion she saw her husband, Arthur, the stainless king. And the man who had taken his place, hurrying off his drapery, revealed the face of Galahad. But, the victory was won, and at the feet of the king lay the form of Evan, of Liddesdale, cold and dead.

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

BY OCTOBER JAMES.

Mount not Pegasus, humble youth of rhyme, Without expecting many a goodly fall! The fairest visions of thy summer-sing! May prove like flower leaves, withered after all.

The brightest hues e'er donned by heather bells, The richest perfumes of the lovely rose, Will lose their beauty and their fragrant spells, If we their petals to the sun expose.

When safely seated on thy gallant steed, With firm hand holding at the bridle rein, Some pattering critter, with an inky red, Unseats and leaves you in the dust again!

## Silver Star, THE BOY KNIGHT;

OR, The Mystery of Osman, the Outlaw.

A PRAIRIE ROMANCE.

BY OLL COOMES.

CHAPTER XV.

MOMENTS OF TERROR. "Tear!" was the ejaculation of the red-skin, as he glided into the room and shot his black, snaky eyes about, permitting them to rest upon the white, terrified face of the fair Helice.

"Red-skin!" exclaimed Sparrowhawk, "why do you intrude here in the Spirit Swamp?"

"Come git scalps—putty squaws—heep lubly," was the answer given in English, such as it was.

The eyes of Sparrowhawk fairly blazed. The force of a demon and the desperation of a madman became set upon his handsome, manly face. The very muscles of his face and neck seemed to contract into hard knots, while his whole person seemed surrounded with a nimbus of superhuman power.

"You are a demon, and I am not enemies—we are strangers," he said, in measured accents; "but come another step and you shall die."

The savage laid his hand upon his tomahawk, and feeling secure in the presence of his friends, he straightened himself up to his full height and took a short step forward.

The next instant he fell dead—shot through the brain.

Without rose a fierce, savage yell, but before another Blackfoot could enter, Silver Star sprang forward and slammed the door shut and bolted it.

Again the savages tore the night with their yells, and the blows of tomahawks fell thick and fast upon the door—a frail barricade to long resist such an assault.

Sparrowhawk saw the door must soon yield. In silent terror, and with a burning humiliation, he turned to Silver Star. He glanced at the fearless young scout, then at Helice and Elwe. The light in his eye had changed. His spirit was unbending.

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"No; Helice would have kept this passage; moreover, they are in a light canoe and sister handles a paddle with wonderful skill. We'll be apt to find them at the river."

With this assurance they glided along. They were nearing the river, and as the girls were still not in sight, Sparrowhawk began to feel uneasy.

Finally they glided out into the river. The moonlight flooded the stream. Quickly the young men glanced up and down the glimmering, placid waters; but nowhere could the girls be seen.

"My God!" cried Sparrowhawk, "we have missed them, Silver Star!"



## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE SURVEYORS' CAMP.

"Yes, Kite," said Old Arkansas, as he and Kit Bandy made their way back from the river into the woods, "that wife of yours is a treasure—a genuine one. What woman ever born 'd a thought of makin' a canoe out of her armbrill, and sailin' out across a roarin' river?"

"Oh, yes; she's a jewel in your eye, Arkansas," said Old Arkansas, "but she's a red-hot skillet flapped over your head or a tater-masher driven into your diaphragm as often as I have, you couldn't see anything smart in the old catapully that done the violence. Oh, I honestly wish the Ingins'd skulp her, dash her old pickers; but instead of that she's actin' like a queen, and courted by that old rip of a White Crane. He's even promised her the position of queen if she'd give up the white people, hotly, and lay down her queen she'd make! Knock the socks off Queen Victory of France. She's a doctor, and that's what makes the Ingins like her. She really does know somethin' 'bout pills and such, and has brought more'n one buck Ingins out of the kinks a-flyin'. Oh, she's a sort of a goddess, and a free character 'mong them, and a laydogging of friends. But she can't stand it always. She'll flap her heel ag'in the bucket some of these days, and then she'll call on Peter at the gates of Paradise."

"Ah! you swear she'll be an angel, do you?"

"She'll go through it if she takes a notion in spite of the doorknocker's club. She's a wif of her own, has Sabina, and alers makes a way; and I reckon she'll follow me upon earth and off."

"If she follows you, Kite, after you leave this hemisfer, she'll catch blue-blazes, nov mind."

"She'll follow if she takes a notion, brimstone or no brimstone; but mebbe the devil and I both can head her off. But, lookee here, Ark, suppose you and me visit that surveying party's camp and see what they're doin'. Somewhere 'r other I can't reconnoiter myself to Surveyor Braash and Scientific Daymon. That's plenty of royal ole scoundrel crappin' out of their eyes; but, arter all, everybody ain't villains because they're not as handsome and lovely and sweet-spirited as you and me, Ark. Do you know that?"

"That's so, Kite; but that's Silver Star that we must look arter, too; and, also, that dasted young feller with the sparryhawk cap and feather jacket. He's got that gal Elwe, 'bout which Silver Star talked so much; and, for some reason or other, he's threatened the life of the Boy Knight. I've an idea sneak in under my skulp, Kit, that that Sparryhawk's not the clear quill."

"D'ye think so, Arkansas? Why? State yer reason, will ye?"

"On account of his mysterious comin' and goin'. Now none of us knows a danged thing 'bout where he belongs; and I've heard it loudly hinted that he's the leader of a gang of robbers, and that his handle is Osman, the Outlaw."

"Great horn that pulled old Jericho! D'ye think that's a shadder of truth in it, Ark?"

"Couldn't be, Kite; but that's my own suspicion's what hinted it to me. A mule's heel's not always stationary when the mule's asleep, Kit Bandy; so keep that in your pipe."

Thus conversing the two old bordermen pushed on through the forest in the direction of the surveyors' camp, and in the course of a few hours they came in sight of the place. It was located in a natural defensive position, and commanded a view in all directions. It was situated upon a high hill or knoll sloping off in all directions. The sides of this knoll were barren of vegetation, smooth and covered with a sandy soil; but upon its crest grew a little clump of trees and in among these the surveyors had pitched their camp.

Without any hesitation Old Arkansas and Kit Bandy ascended the hill and entered the camp where they were met by Surveyor Braash and his men.

The scouts took in the camp at a glance. There were about fifteen men of different nationalities, and some of forbidding looks, in the party. All were armed to the teeth and looked as though they would as soon fight as eat. A wagon of the heavy military pattern, four draught mules and some twenty fine-looking saddle-horses and equipments comprised their outfit. As evidence of their business, there lay at one side a surveyor's staff, a compass, a theodolite, a Gunter's chain and pins, a flag-pole and other things pertaining to a first-class outfit of a surveying party.

"I am glad to meet you again, gentlemen," said Herman Braash, "and hope you will accept of the hospitality of our camp as long as you feel so disposed."

"Thank you, strangers," replied Bandy; "we're great guns for fun and good eatin'. We may, and we may not stay here awhile with you—jist owin' to the weather."

"I desire, gentlemen," said Professor Daymon, "to secure the assistance of one of you a few minutes in helping me make up the topography of this country. Whichever is the best acquainted with this vicinity will please step into my tent."

Kit Bandy motioned to Arkansas to go with him, so the old scout followed him into the tent. The first thing the professor did was to take from an innocent-looking camp-chest a bottle of liquor and a small goblet and invite Arkansas to drink. The old man touched the liquor lightly, and Daymon, after drinking himself, took a small, portable secretary from his chest and opening it drew a well-dressed man, a member of the White River country therefrom. This he spread out before Arkansas, and then said:

"I presume you can read and write, can you, Arkansas?"

"Sorry to say, professor, that I can't know 'B' from bull's 'E' used to have a hang of the letters, but as it alers seemed a waste of the raw material to be thinkin' 'em over, I let 'em slip and filled up my noggin with some good, useful resalts for burns, curin' petries and such."

"Well, I don't know as the want of a knowledge of the alphabet will hinder you giving me just as much information as though you had the learning of Humboldt. This map, now, embraces this country so far as the geographical dimensions are concerned; but many of the prominent features of the region are not indicated by location, and as we have to make a complete report, even to minute details, we must have the information to make it upon. To travel the country over would require much time and labor, and so we decided to call some one already acquainted with the lay of the land, as the saying goes."

"Yes, yes," said Arkansas, gazing upon the map; "but what river's that, professor?" he said, pointing to a red line running north and south across the map.

"That's not a river, but an isothermal line, Arkansas," explained the professor, smiling at the old man's childish ignorance; "but now, let us commence at the Sioux village and follow east down the river; what are the general features of the country?"

"Wal, professor, I'm not very handy in makin' geography, but then I'll tackle it best I know how. Arzen leavin' the Sioux village the country, for a ways, is level and lightly timbered, but after it gets into the vicinity of the Spirit Swamp it's tumbled up wuss than a trundle-bed, and kivered with stunted pines and grubs, till ye can't rest. Then comes the Spirit Swamp—a nasty dismal hole, put her down, professor. There's more'n five hundred acres of it, and nothin' but reeds and willers, and frogs grow and ripen there."

"Is it accessible by foot or by canoe?" asked the professor.

"They say it's navi-gate-able for canoes, tho' I can't say sure enough for gografy. You see the swamp backs up against the north side of the river; put it down, professor; and a canoe could enter it from the White Earth. But as it's said to be the abode of spirits and goblins, put it down, professor; that Old Arkansas Abe, who's not afeard to face death and destruction, could not be hired to enter it in broad daylight."

"Then you have never explored the swamp?" asked Daymon.

"Explored it? Heavens, I'd as soon think of explorin' purgatory. Why, professor, when I pass along the river whar the Spirit buckles on to her, I feel cold and chokish. It seems as though the wind is always blowin' over the swamp, and such a roar as them reeds make—why, it's as if it would make the ha'r raise on a dead nigger's head. Oh, a dasted bad pill is the Spirit Swamp; put her down, professor."

For fully an hour Arkansas continued his description of the country, and when Daymon had obtained all the information of this character desired, he turned the conversation upon other topics. The weather, the hunting, the Indians—all were fully discussed; and finally Daymon remarked, incidentally:

"We were all wonderfully worked up the other night, when encamped south of here, by the appearance of a dark spot against the clear sky. Many were the conjectures as to what it was, but none was right, for it proved to be a balloon. It was going north, and appeared to be settling toward the earth; but what become of it I know not."

"That was the night of the twenty-first, wasn't it?" asked Old Arkansas.

"Let me see," said the professor, reflectively. "I believe it was—yes, it was the night of the twenty-first; I remember now. Did you see it?"

"No, but Silver Star, the Boy Knight of the Peraro, did, and that's not all. The balloon was nighly down when he seed it, and he heard the balloons quarrelin' like man and wif 'mong themselves 'bout somethin', and presently he saw a bundle let down from the balloon with a rope. Then up went the air-boat, and the feller that started to quarrel ag'in, and presently the boy saw somethin'—well, it was a man—thrust out of the balloon and come screamin' down through the air, and strikin' the ground, was mashed into a lump of red liver. And that bundle, professor, turned out to be the sweetest little gal—so Silver Star said—you ever seed it?"

"Good heavens! do you believe it, Arkansas?"

"Yes; Silver wouldn't lie."

"What become of the girl?"

"Well, Silver took charge of her—put her on his horse and started to the fort; but the Ingins got after 'em and he sent her on to the fort, and he dodged off afoot. But alas! the boss come through all hunky, but that was no gal on his back."

"You don't tell!" exclaimed the professor; "then Silver Star doesn't know anything about her?"

"No, I know he don't."

"Do you have any idea where she is, Arkansas?"

"If you can find the den of one Sparryhawk, a young trapper, or hunter or somethin', I think you'll find the gal there. I heard him tell a person so, and—"

At this juncture Arkansas caught the eye of Kit Bandy who was standing near, and who gave the scout a look that expressed more than words could have said. However, to get around an abrupt break in his honest revelation of facts, he went right on.

"But that Sparryhawk is a crazy loon that imagines himself lord of creation and cock of the foddler-ward. My opinion is, that the gal over among the hills, and the balloon's leader's Mother Eve, professor."

"Very likely," replied Daymon, making an entry in his diary.

The two conversed a few minutes longer, then rose and went out, when a general running conversation ensued. From early Daymon and Braash left camp in opposite directions, but managed to get together on the south side of the grove. But of these movements Bandy and Arkansas appeared to take no notice.

Kit walked about camp examining, with a childish curiosity, the surveying instruments and outfit, and finally he strolled off toward the north side of the knoll, and took a look at the country beyond. Over among the wooded hills he saw a smoke rising as from a camp, and it filled his mind with no little wonder and curiosity.

While pondering the matter over he heard a slight, flitting sound at his right, and looking around he discovered a red flag attached to a bush flapping in the wind. And he had no sooner discovered this than he saw a horseman emerge from the woods in a line with the smoke over among the hills, and he made toward him. It did not require a second glance to tell him that it was an Indian, and as he came nearer, Kit saw, to his surprise, that it was a Blackfoot chief.

"Wal, now, what's brought the Blackfeet away down hereabouts?" the old man mused.

"Horn of Joshua! if the Si-oxes git wind of it, they'll bounce 'em like ducks would a June-bug. And the bugger is comin' right smack up this way. Who knows—"

The sound of footsteps cut short his soliloquy, and turning he saw Professor Daymon approaching.

"Perfesser," he said, pointing toward the Indian, "what does that mean? Can you explain it?"

"By gracious! it's an Indian, isn't it?" exclaimed Daymon.

"Yes, a Blackfoot chief," responded Bandy, eying Daymon.

"Well, he mustn't enter our camp," said Daymon, "and count our force, or he might give us trouble. I will go out and meet him, and find out what he's after."

Daymon advanced from the thicket and moved down the knoll until he met the Indian. The latter dismounted and the two held a long conversation, keeping the horse between them and Kit. Finally the chief mounted and rode back toward the woods; and as the professor approached Bandy, he said:

"I coaxed the vagrant and cutthroat to go back for fear the boys would raise his hair."

"What's the Blackfeet doin' down here, two or three hundred miles off of their own latitude?"

"He says a few of them came down to hunt buffalo, but I don't believe him. I think they're looking up Sioux scalps."

"Neither do I," responded Kit, in a tone that caused the professor to look up as if in doubt as to what he meant.

The two returned to camp, talking as they went.

Dinner was soon announced by a strapping big negro cook.

Upon invitation, Kit and Arkansas broke bread with the surveyors.

After the repast was over the old scouts concluded to take their departure, and as they were not urged to stay, they had no difficulty in getting away.

When out in the woods, Old Arkansas asked:

"Well, Kite, my posey, what do you think of the surveyors?"

"Not quite as much as you do, for I didn't tell 'em everything I knowed, and gussat what I didn't know, as I heard you doin'. Oh, by the time you've served a term or two of married life you'll be a leetle more keertful how you shoot off the lip of you."

"Don't you think they're surveyors, Kite? Haven't they got their compass, and chains, and flag-poles, and kind words, and good treatment, and all sich? humph! say, Kite!"

"Yes, and didn't Judas have a kiss for our Savior when he betrayed Him? humph! say, Arkansas?"

"Oh, well, if yer goin' to quatin' Skriptor and usin' of metaphysics, I ain't thar. Ka-ris-topher. My book-larin's not very plentiful, and so if ye want to run with me, you've got to talk solid sense right me. Oh, I can fetch one, Kite, that can hold you level on the talk till the cows come home—that can read and talk on any subject from matrimony to a Babylonian inscription."

"Your confidant, Professor Daymon, eh?"

"No, that old honey-mug of yours, Sabina Bandy."

"Oh, Arkansas! you're a fiend—you delight in torturin' me—you're second cousin to old Satan."

"Thanks for the rose-tinted compliment,

Kite; but all jokin' aside, I struck a lead in Skinfintic Daymon's tent by stretchin' the blanket a leetle and bein' communicative."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, sir; he took out a map of these diggin's and asked me if I could read. I told him no, and I meant that I couldn't read Hottentot, and then he showed me the map. The first thing that rested my 'tention was a red line runnin' north and south across the map, and says he, snailin', 'It's not a river, but an isothermal line,' or some sich a name. But right thar, Bandy, is whar the little eddication, that I had mauled into me at the Brimstone Holler school-house, come into play. Right along that red line it said 'Horn of Joshua!'"

"Horn of Joshua?"

"Yes, sir; that's what she said, Bandy, and it's my solemn opinion that Skinfintic Daymon's the man that run that balloon that Silver Star got the gal out of. He talked about the balloon—said they all seed 'er pass over 'em; but somehow 'r other I couldn't swallow all he said after he lied 'bout that icythermule line. Now how's that, Adonis of beauty?"

"Wal, that's been my opinion, all along, of them. They may be government surveyors, and all that, but that doesn't hinder 'em from bein' rascals. Government has lots of sich servants," said Kit.

"Wal, I mean to look around that Blackfoot camp, and keep an eye open," declared Arkansas.

Second the motion, Arkansas, for I think thar's a chance for hydrogins of an atarxi this and to-morry night. Thar's a nigger in the wood-pile, somewhere."

"The first I do 'll be to reconnoiter that Blackfoot camp when night comes, and see what relation it bears to the surveyors' camp; and if thar isn't some skulps to be hided, and it might be sich a thing that Silver Star's in their clutches."

"Well, while you're doin' the Blackfoot camp, I'll run up and interview the Si-ox horl-nest."

"Hate to lose your camp, Ka-ris-topher."

"I'll meet you round these diggin's in a day or two—mebbe sooner. You may expect me down on you at any moment."

The two old bordermen parted, Bandy going west, and Arkansas, by a circuitous route, going in the direction of the Blackfoot camp. The latter did not hurry, for it was some time until night, and darkness was necessary for a successful reconnoissance.

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ward the river, and flung its red beams across the water against the black wall of the forest trees. It shone full upon the old man's face with a white, garish light.

"Great Jehovah!" he finally exclaimed: "I do wonder if Silver Star and Sparryhawk'll git roasted in that lake of fire! Mighty Moses! that is a grand, awful and—"

He felt something touch his belt, and looking around, he saw a great bony hand lift his knife and revolver from his belt from behind. A cry burst from his lips, and turning quickly, he found himself face to face with the Sioux chief, White Crane.

Silent as a shadow had the renegade approached and taken the weapons from Arkansas's girdle, while he stood awe-stricken by the fiery spectacle before him. But the instant their eyes met, the old scout's fist was aimed, with lightning quickness at the face of the chief; but the latter was on his guard, and warding the blow, he clenched with his white foe.

And together the two went down in a hand-to-hand struggle—locked in each other's embrace like maddened tigers.

(To



## THAT EARLY MUSTACHE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

What tongue can tell the joys that fill  
The heart of the young man Jack  
When heath his nose the first fuzz shows  
Foretelling a mustache!

He's prouder than the richest man  
Could be with heaps of cash  
Over that brown first fuzz of down—  
That ghost of a mustache.

Some day the girls will praise its curls.  
Oh, frost, be not too rash,  
And touch one hair of promise there  
And spoil that dear mustache!

A looking-glass he cannot pass,  
For light and dark he looks to mark  
The growth of that mustache.

How very slow it seems to grow!  
And should you call it trash,  
Or speak of it with touch of wit,  
He'll fight for that mustache.

Ask if that's dirt, and he'll feel hurt,  
And both his eyes will flash;  
The yield, indeed, shows but scant seed  
Planted for that mustache!

He drinks cold tea for fear that he  
Might scald and bring to smash  
That little crop upon his lip  
He calls "his dear mustache."

He longs to see the time when he  
Can twist it in a lash  
And lay it there across his ear—  
The prized, loved mustache.

It never lacks for brush and wax,  
For this he spends some cash.  
But horrors, hark, how slow it grows!  
Waxes that dear mustache!

Pride of his heart! The barber's art  
Is now invoked by Dash  
To cultivate and irrigate  
That fungus-like mustache.

The barber smiles and puts on oils—  
Dyes warranted to wash  
And with many an ointment doth anoint  
That delicate mustache.

And though this youth, in very truth,  
Is large from eating hash,  
'Tis plain to see how much he  
Wrapped up in that mustache!

## Post and Plain;

Rifle and Revolver in the Buffalo Range.

BY LAUNCE POYNTEZ.

II.

HOW TO SHOOT A PISTOL.

WHEN we stepped outside on the parade-ground of the fort, we found that the snow had ceased, while the wind was blowing from a different quarter. The heavy gray clouds were scudding across the sky, low down, and the western horizon showed some patches of blue.

"We shall have a regular nipper to-morrow," announced Bullard. "A north-east wind on the plains is no joke, I tell you. The thermometer will be down to ten below zero, at least. Later in the season it will sink to forty."

"And how do you manage to keep warm?" asked Moore.

"Oh, it never blows hard when we're down at forty. I'd sooner have a still day with forty degrees than a north-west with ten. We'll not borrow trouble if we can help it."

We passed across the parade-ground, which was now dotted with figures. The men were coming out of their quarters and beginning to snowball each other, while officers were strolling from one house to another. We noticed that in the garrison every one wore some sort of uniform, and that the blue great-coats were universal.

We made our way toward the stables, along a path which had already been made by the garrison snow-plows. On the way we passed several officers, and in each case we had to stop and be introduced all round, a ceremony conducted with a great deal of bowing and hat-lifting, for officers of the army are above all things polite. Two or three joined us when they heard where we were going, and we soon reached the garrison practice-ground.

This lay in rear of the long rows of stalls that composed the cavalry stables, and it proved to be a corral, which had lately been occupied by cattle and horses. Bruce told us it was the exercising-ground for the morning gallop of the horses.

It had been agreed beforehand that Captain Bullard, who had the reputation of being the best pistol-shot in the garrison, was to instruct those of us who were deficient, and Miles—Bruce's orderly—followed us with a heavy box of ammunition.

"Now, gentlemen," said the captain, as we stopped before a board target about six feet square. "I suppose you all know that there are two distinct kinds of pistol-shooting. We do the one with a big pistol and a long cartridge, anywhere from fifty to a hundred and fifty yards, and it's just the same as rifle-work. You have to bring your sights on a line and hold them there, being careful not to pull off. Miles, go and nail up a target."

Miles went to the board fence and nailed up a paper target just like those we had used at Littleton for shot-gun practice.

"Now, gentlemen, fire away," ordered Bullard. "One shot apiece; and I'll bet a dollar no one makes a bull's-eye at fifty yards."

This proved quite correct. The two-inch circle of black which formed the bull's-eye was nothing but a black speck at fifty yards.

Moore was the first to fire, taking his now deliberate aim at arm's length. Miles, who stood near the target in a pit, put out a long pointer and marked the shot in the paper, just at the top edge.

Charley Green followed, and got on the target a little nearer. Old Mart then advanced and put in a bullet within some three inches of the bull, and the rest of us had about the same luck, all on the target, but none nearer the bull than four or six inches, while most of us were at the edge of the paper.

Then Bullard began to speak:

"You see, gentlemen, yonder is a two-foot target, covering more space than the vitals of any man in this crowd. If you can't hit a twenty-inch circle every time, you can't drop a man except by a chance shot. I notice you all shoot the same way, at arm's length. That's all very well for quick shots at short range, but it won't do for accuracy. Look here."

He was standing with his left side toward the target as he spoke, the pistol dangling loosely in his right. We heard the click of the locks, and the next moment Bullard threw up his left elbow as high as his face, resting the thumb and fingers of his open left hand on his breast. Up came his pistol hand, and the barrel of the weapon rested on the raised elbow of the marksman. Hardly taking any aim he fired, and Miles's pointer came out of the pit and rested just under the bull's eye.

"I didn't expect to hit the bull that time," said Bullard. "I was only showing you how to aim quickly and accurately. You see it took me less than three seconds to fire, and it came nearer the bull than any of you gentlemen, who aimed slowly and deliberately. Some of you took nearly half a minute to fire. Hold your breath when you fire. You will find your front sight almost on the mark. Aim correctly. See!"

As he spoke, he fired; and Miles showed the white disk over the bull's-eye for the first time that day.

That's the whole secret of accurate shooting

with the pistol at long range," said Bullard. "Treat it as a rifle, and get all the rest you can."

We very soon found the benefit of his advice, and our shots began to cluster round the bull's-eye in close proximity. Jack Moore and old Mart, who were both good rifle-shots already, as we knew, made bull's-eyes, and the greenest of us found very little trouble in sighting correctly over the rest made by the left elbow. Before another round could be fired it became necessary to change the target, as the holes could no longer be distinguished apart. By the time it was dark we had satisfied ourselves that we could shoot straight with a pistol, and went back to our quarters with great content.

Bullard had promised to show us what he meant by "quick shooting," that evening, and invited our party into the cellar of his quarters for the purpose.

"These heavy cartridges," he explained, "go so strong, and send a bullet so far, that it's not safe to practice above ground, unless there's a dead plain and no people behind the target, or else a bank to hold the balls. I've got a target made on purpose, and I'll show you how to shoot without danger."

The cellar of the captain's quarters proved to be large and deep, the walls being at least eight feet high. At one end of this cellar was a short tunnel, about six feet square, boarded in at the sides and ending in a clay-bank, with no wall to support it.

"There, gentlemen," said Bullard; "that little gallery cost me about twenty dollars, for mason work to arch the entrance, for boarding on the sides and putting in an iron plate above. No more shot can hurt any one. It's bound to go into the dirt. Now please observe this target. It is made of a thick plate of steel and rings like a bell. It is just six inches square. If you hit it, you will hear the sound. If you miss it, the bank will take all the shot in silence."

"But how are we to find our misses?" asked Moore.

"You don't want any misses. This kind of shooting is different from the other. You have only to hit six-inch target from a distance of twenty or thirty feet at the utmost. You can begin at six feet if you like, and be sure to hit every time, moving back till you get the hang of it."

"And what if the pistol shoots over?" queried Charley Green.

"It will not 'shoot over,' as you call it. You are not to look at the sights at all."

"Then what are we to do?"

"I'll show you. In the first place, remember that this practice is for firing rapidly from a galloping horse at a galloping buffalo. You've no time to look at sights, and could not keep them steady if you had. You must point the pistol so that the barrel goes straight at the mark; the bullet is sure to go straight, too. You have to learn just how to grasp the stock, so that your barrel will point directly at the object. You can point your finger or a stick at anything, straight enough. Nothing will teach you but practice. See, I don't use one pistol; I know the grip of it. Observe."

There was but one dim candle in the cellar, and we could just discern Bullard's target, painted white, against the dark background of the cellar. Bullard raised his revolver and fired twice, the bullets hitting the target in the center. "Oh! how beautiful they are!" laughed Nannie, holding up her hand to catch one.

An apprehensive look came into Tom Barton's eyes; but he laughed and said:

He was out from under the buffalo-robe which covered them all, and on the seat beside the driver, before Nannie had time to cry:

"Tom, if you desert me like this, I'll never come out with you again!"

The reins were already in Tom's hands, and he cut each of the spirited horses with the whip, so that they leaped forward at a break-neck pace.

"This is fine!" cried Will Hurst, and while his face lighted up with keen enjoyment of the rapid motion, the girls hung in sympathy—all but Nannie, who felt surprised and a little chagrined that Tom should leave her side, even for such a lark.

"Tom! Where's your head?" cried Sam Gardner, after awhile. "You're not going in the right direction."

Hoping not to attract the notice of the others, Tom had taken a long sweep to the right, and was now heading straight for the nearest shore. Now he replied, evasively:

"Tell me how to drive!"

Thicker and thicker descended the snow-flakes. The distant shores, only marked by patches of white oak, whose brown leaves clung tenaciously to the stems, and some leafy hunk, on whose steep face the snow could find no resting-place, grew faint, then undistinguishable, while the feathery flakes increased to the size of plums. Ten minutes from the time it began to snow, the ice was covered an inch deep, and the snow no longer judged over how wide a radius it ranged.

"By Jove! fellows," cried Ned Sawyer, "I don't like the look of this. Suppose we lose our way! The sun will be down in two hours, and this isn't going to be a summer night."

Everybody saw in a flash why Tom had taken the reins and turned to the nearest shore, urging his horses fairly into a runaway pace.

Ruth Fawcley tremulously grasped the arm of Sam Gardner. Sadie Kingsford started forward, and when her feet touched the ground, looked about in the faces of all. Lou Barton reached toward her brother mutely. Nannie turned out her hand toward him and said aloud:

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"Oh, Tom!" cried Tom. "No losing heart. We're as good as a dozen dead people yet. It doesn't make any difference where we strike the shore. We can find a farm-house inside of half an hour. Here, Jim, take the lines. You can drive as well as I can, now. All you have to do is to give the horses their own heads. I'll pull us through. Meanwhile I'll get back into the box and cheer the faint-hearts up a bit."

"It is so good of you to come, Tom," whispered Nannie, when he was again at her side, seeing that the rheumatic old ladies have their winter flannels, I always put my finger in the pie. I don't deserve any credit. It is not true benevolence at all, but simply that I have it in my nature to work and to work with a will, and these affairs happen to be the exciting ones which come in my way. I would have been all the same, no matter where I had been placed. For instance, if my sphere lay in the fashionable world, I would make more calls, see more people, know more of their hobbies, out-dress and outdance any other young lady in my set. I suppose you think I am talking of things I know nothing about."

"I don't doubt your ability. I was only thinking what conquests you would make there, and how unkind of fortune to have denied us such a queen. I wonder you can be contented here, when you might shine 'one above all compare,' Miss Yrill."

"I have never even thought of it."

"I think of it now. Mrs. Valdere has commissioned me to secure you as her guest for the season, and this visit of mine is for no other purpose."

Mrs. Valdere, his step-mother, was Xina's cousin, but for all taken she had given for years, the girl's existence might have been unknown to her. Indeed, it had been recalled to a very convenient memory by the fact that Valdere, for whom she had a motherly pride and fondness, had become entangled in an objectionable love-affair.

Whether divination or secret questioning revealed the fact that Xina was both a beauty and an heiress, matters not; Valdere was sent upon an unwilling mission, which had already lost every objectionable feature.

All the sunshine went out of the house of Otis Roth when Xina left it. Something, he could not tell what, but it fancy it must have been Valdere's management, had prevented him telling her all that was in his heart before her departure. It scarcely caused him a qualm of uneasiness; he had not a doubt of Xina's understanding between them was so perfect.

she crowned him she whispered: "Samson No. 2?" and almost choked with suppressed laughter.

There was one question to be satisfied on which Tom would have forsworn his meerschaum, to wit: did this coquetish little sprite ever have a serious moment when she could learn to love him? To-day was not the first time, by a great many, that he had carried her in his arms; but he always got his hair pulled when he tried it. And when he asked her if she really did care anything for him, she arched her brows in mock dismay, and cried:

"Love such a great bear as you! No, indeed! I'm afraid of you!"

Next to them, along the same side of the "box," sat meek little Ruth Fawcley and her gallant, Sam Gardner.

She looked at him shyly out of the corner of her eye, and blushed every time he spoke to her; and during that awful moment when he was carrying her to the sleigh she would have died of shame had not she been kept in countenance by the other girls, who were "in the same fix." Sam was a harmless young man, with a face as smooth as Ruth's own; but he wrote verses that made Ruth cry, and the head that he sketched of her was "just lovely."

Opposite them Will Hurst did homage to the charms of his "strawberry blonde." Sam had heard the proverbial capriciousness of temper; but there was a steadiness in Will's gaze, when he chose to be serious, which made her stand just the least bit in awe of his displeasure, though she had never seen him manhandle or putting in an iron plate above.

Everybody predicted that Will would some day develop into a "solid man" in business circles. This, and the fact that he had the only full-grown mustache in the party, may have made him attractive in the girls' eyes, though he had as yet been no love-passages between them.

Last came Ned Sawyer and the tall and rather stately Lou Barton.

Ned was slight in build, with small hands and feet, light hair, light gray eyes, and a mischievous mustache; he played the piano with spirit, sung in a tenor voice, and waltzed divinely. It was probably his elegance that attracted the girls. On his side, he liked Lou because she was by all odds the most stylish girl the village could boast.

Any other of the village swains would have thought twice before catching this rather haughty young lady off her feet; but Ned, with a young lady's self-complacency, argued that if she "loved" him, she would take him, he had but to take his pick among the other village belles; they would all be glad enough to get him!

They were near the center of the lake, the nearest shore at least four miles distant, the furthest not less than eight or ten, when Sam Gardner asked:

"Isn't it getting rather dark? Hallo! it has clouded over!"

All looked up. The sky was a dull-gray pall of clouds, and the stars were hidden.

"Shouldn't wonder if we had snow," ventured Ned Sawyer. "It will spoil all the skating. That's pleasant!"

Even as he spoke, a white flake came fluttering down, then another, and another, until the air was full of the feathery crystals.

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ready to work like a hero, if somebody else would only lead. Ned was—rather helpless.

Ruth showed resignation; Sadie fretful helplessness; Lou resoluteness; Nannie—she trusted in Tom.

"Let Sadie and Ruth ride first," said Lou, taking the arm of her escort, who now yielded to her direction.

"Wrap them up well," cautioned Tom, and started forward with Nannie at his side.

"Midget," he said to her, "I'd carry you, if I had a horse to wrap you up in; but without it you can only keep your blood in circulation by walking."

"You're always good, Tom," she replied, pressing his arm; and after a pause, "Tom, we must not live to see another day together."

"Tut! tut!" began Tom; but she interrupted him.

"It is true, isn't it?"

"There is such a possibility, certainly. I suppose I may as well admit it."

"Tom, I want to tell you something. I may never have another opportunity. Stop down."

He complied.

Suddenly raising on tiptoe she kissed him on the lips.

"There, Tom," she said, "I want to tell you with my own lips, before I have lost the power, that though I have teased you so mercilessly, I have loved you all along. Oh, Tom! I have slept with your picture at my lips, and wakened in the night and found myself sobbing with sheer happiness at the thought that you loved me best in all the world. I wish I had told you this long ago, Tom, and made you happy during the time I have wasted in tormenting you."

"Why, you dear girl," murmured Tom, with tears in his eyes, "you have made me the happiest fellow in the world for over a year."

"Not always, Tom. I've seen pain in your eyes, sometimes, when I have plagued you. Oh! if I had been kept in such uncertainty for a year, I know I should have died!"

"Of course I always knew that you must really love me; but I confess that it is a little more satisfying to hear you say so," admitted honest Tom.

A new phase in the character of his lady-love was now disclosed to him. Who would have believed that so much tenderness lay hidden beneath such levity!

Suddenly Tom stopped with a suppressed cry.

"What is it, Tom?" asked Nannie.

"Midget," said Tom, in a strange voice, "if we get out of this will you marry me?"

"Oh, Tom! How can you ask such a question, on the very brink of the grave, maybe?" said his lady-love, reproachfully.

"But will you?"

"Yes, Tom."

"As soon as you like."

"On the first day of May? That's your birthday, you know."

"Yes, dear. It is good of you to think of that."

"Honor bright, you will marry me on the first day of May?"

"Yes, Tom, if you wish it. But how strangely you talk."

"Hurrah!" yelled Tom, and caught her up and sealed the bargain on her lips in a twinkling.

"Hurrah!" he repeated to the others, who had now come up with him. "There's the shore, within a rod of where we stand. Look up! Do you see that overhanging tree? There's not two feet that on the shores of the lake. Within a stone throw over that bank are waiting for us a red-hot fire and all the cider we can drink, to say nothing of such a welcome as only old Tim Waterhouse and his hearty old dame can give!"

All looked up. The bank was hidden by snow so as to be indistinguishable, but overhead the outlines of a scraggy oak could be faintly traced, as if loomed through the gathering gloom, amid the falling snow.

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" shouted Tom again. "I have found present safety and happiness for life at the same time. Bear witness all, that this lady promises that if we come safely through this adventure, she will marry me on the first day of May!"

"Yes, Tom," laughed Nannie, fairly jumping up and down with fun, "but I didn't say what year! It may not be before the next Centennial!"

## Xina.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

XINA walked home over the crisp snow, as the first flush of the morning stained the eastern sky. She had been sitting up with a neighbor's child, but the glow of exercise had taken the place of her fagged look as she opened the door. A great, fragrant wood-fire burned within, and two young men stood before it.

Both were an everyday sight to Xina, but Valdere, who had not yet put off the furs and wraps of travel, was an immediate object of grateful interest in her eyes. Handsome, aristocratic, thoroughly at ease—Roth, poor, honest fellow! already felt keenly the contrast between them.

"Back so soon?" said he, brightening as he always did at sight of Xina. "I meant to have gone for you. How is Richier?"

"Well," she answered, and he knew she meant well beyond the possibility of earthly ills forever.

Valdere, who was not personally given to humanitarianism, found himself capable of admiring acts of mercy in others. This tall, fair girl, with her coronet of golden braids, and earnest, shining eyes, looking like St. Cecilia, claimed his veneration and respect. He had the rare faculty of seeming to sympathize, and in five minutes Xina was talking to him as animatedly as though she had known him for years.

"Yes, I really don't know what the neighborhood would do without me," she laughed. "No matter what is going on, from a wedding to a child's tea-party, from naming the babies to seeing that the rheumatic old ladies have their winter flannels, I always put my finger in the pie. I don't deserve any credit. It is not true benevolence at all, but simply that I have it in my nature to work and to work with a will, and these affairs happen to be the exciting ones which come in my way. I would have been all the same, no matter where I had been placed. For instance, if my sphere lay in the fashionable world, I would make more calls, see more people, know more of their hobbies, out-dress and outdance any other young lady in my set. I suppose you think I am talking of things I know nothing about."

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